

# QuickSearch

## by Alain Birtz

**QuickSearch** is a text search utility for OS X, surely the fastest in the world. The search engine was written in highly optimized assembler code to achieve the highest performance for such a tool. The interface is easy but powerful, allowing you to work quickly and efficiently. And best, you get **QuickSearch** for free!

This version of **QuickSearch** works only for OS 10.5 or higher and 64 bits Mac (Intel or PowerPC). **QuickSearch** (application) holds everything relevant to the search: the binary executable code, the preferences, the search target and the result files. You can move **QuickSearch** anywhere: preferences and target parameters are always preserved.

To start **QuickSearch** double-click the icon

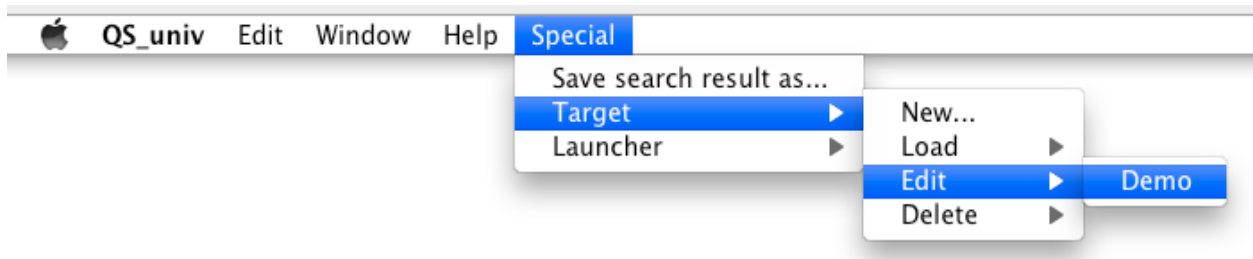


**QuickSearch** also launches when files and/or folders are dropped on this icon: a new target is created and the search will be done inside these files and/or folders documents.

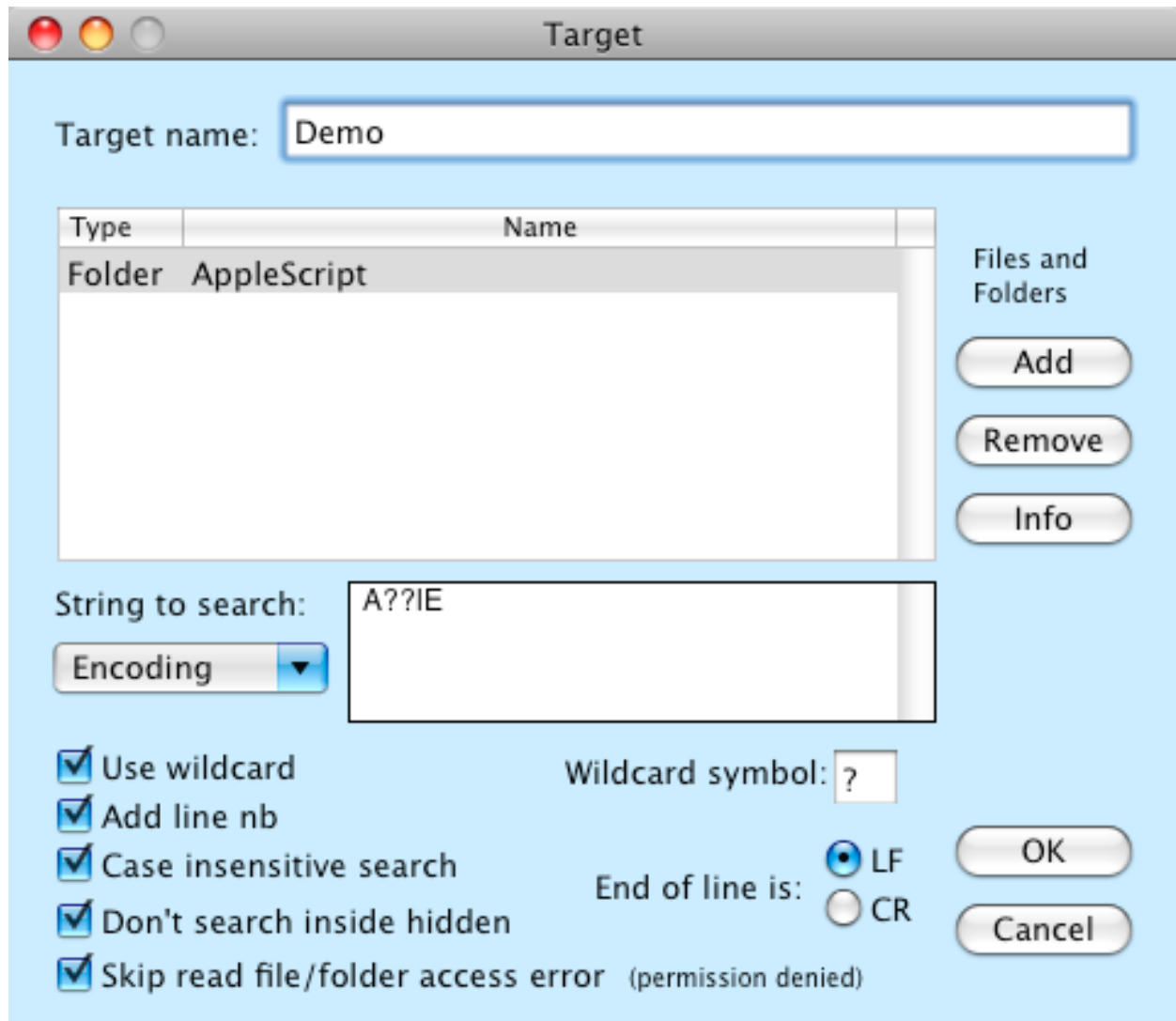
### Target

All searches with **QuickSearch** involve a target. A target is a set of elements such the files and/or folders documents in which the search will be done, the text to search and the search options.

Targets are automatically saved and ready to use for the next session. The targets are handled via the **Special > Target** menu (**New, Edit, Delete**).



To use another target click the **Load** in the same menu.



In this example the name of the target is *Demo*. The search is done recursively in all items of the folder *AppleScript* (and inside all subfolders). The string to search for is *Apple* (with 2 uncertain letters standing by ??).

The **Remove** and **Add** buttons change the target by deleting or adding files or folders. The **Open** panel give access to hidden files or folders like */bin* or *.Trash* (files with leading period character are always hidden in the Unix world). Also the panel let you see inside the package content of application and other bundle. The **Info** button shows the complete path name of the selected item in the target window.

If you are unsure of the spelling of a word to search use a wildcard. You must then turn on the check box **Use wildcard** and set the **Wildcard symbol** (above the wildcard is "?"). By example if the text field **String to search** is *co??r* then **QuickSearch** will find every occurrence like *color*, *cover*, *decoder* and *protocolrepresentation*

The **Encoding** popup button let you search from special format like UTF8, Unicode and foreign language. For a finer search (inside binary code by example) use hexadecimal input. The translation of *co??r* in hexadecimal is 63 6F ? ? 72 (note that wild-cards don't change). The radio popup converts automatically from one format to an other (like text to hexadecimal and vice versa).

The check box **Add line no.** adds the line number to the output result. The ascll code for the new line character must be provided. This code is usually 10 but sometimes 13 is also used (Micro\$oft document).

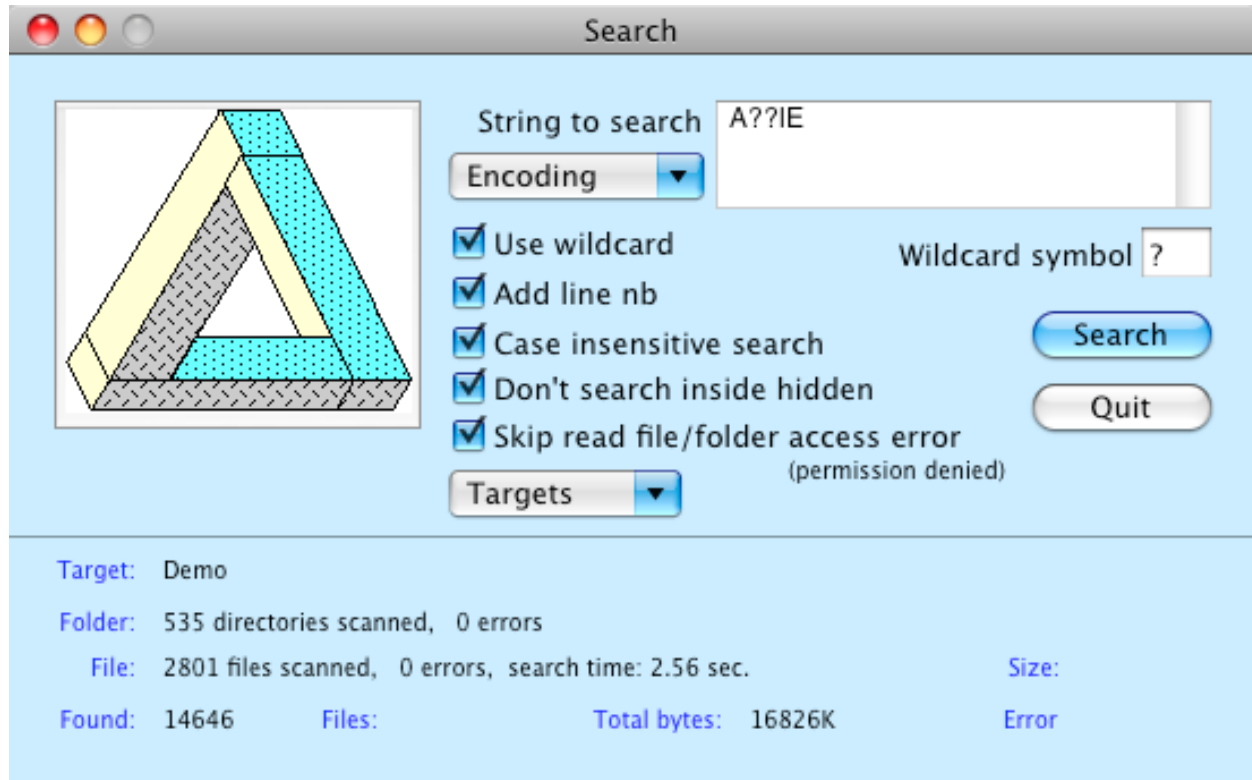
The check box **Case insensitive search** makes the search insensitive to upper and lower case letter. In the target *Demo* above **QuickSearch** finds Apple but also apple or aPPLe because the box **Case insensitive search** is marked.

The check box **Don't search inside hidden** tell **QuickSearch** to not search into the target hidden file/folder.

The last check box **Skip read file/folder access error** forces **QuickSearch** to be unaware of the error happening when the user does not have the permission needed to read a file of the target.

## Searching

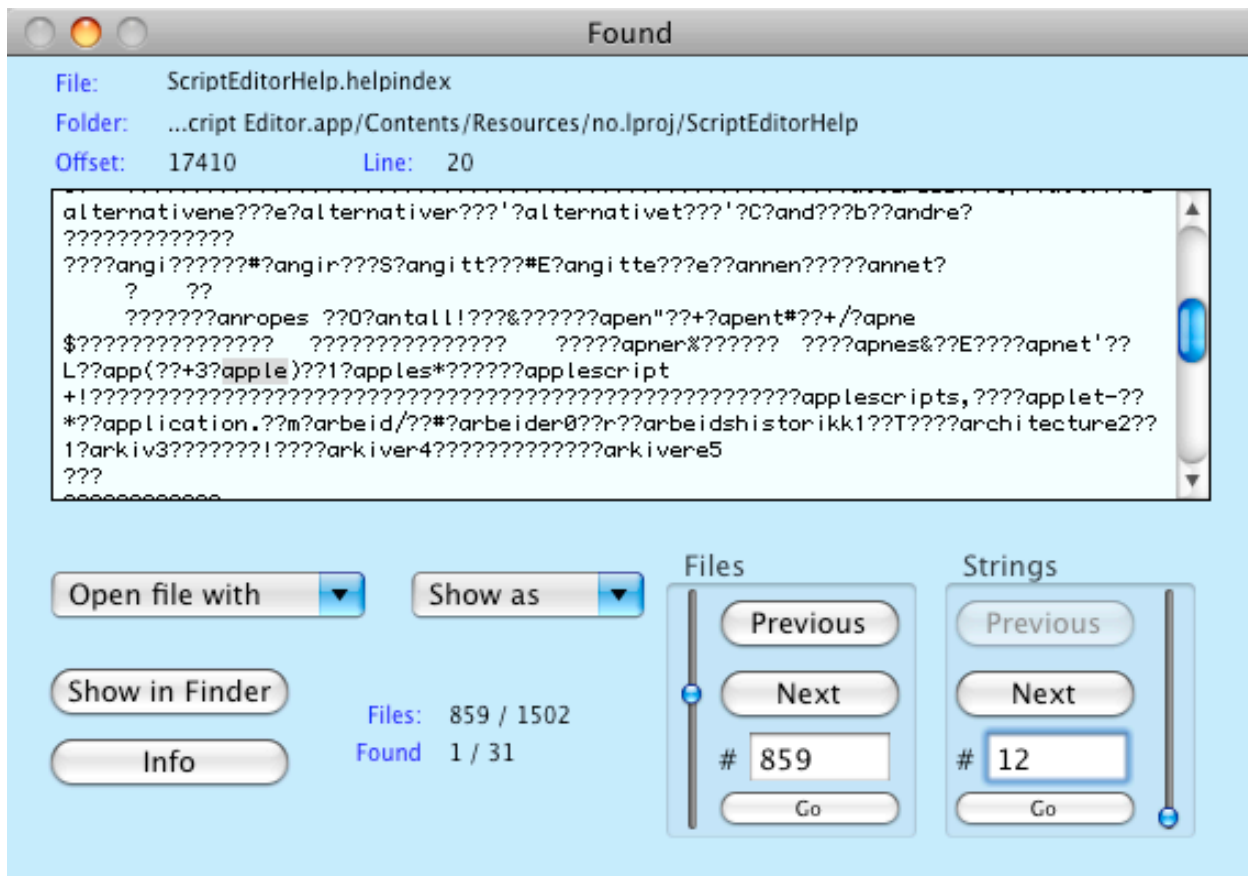
When the **Target** window closes two windows appear: **Search** and **Found**. The window **Search** is automatically set to the **Target** window parameters.



The parameters in the **Search** window can be modified without changing those saved in the **Target** window. Just click the **Search** button to start the search.

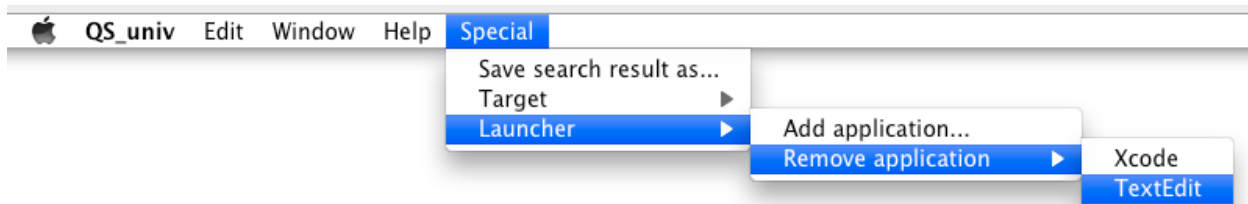
Use the **Target** popup button to get a new target on the fly. The search progress is shown at the lower pane of the **Search** window. Warning: the **QuickSearch** engine is so fast that time used to display the progress can easily exceed the time use by the search task. Select the kind of info you wish to see and the refresh info rate in the **Preferences** window.

When the search is done (or interrupted by the **Stop** button) the **Found** window displays the search result.



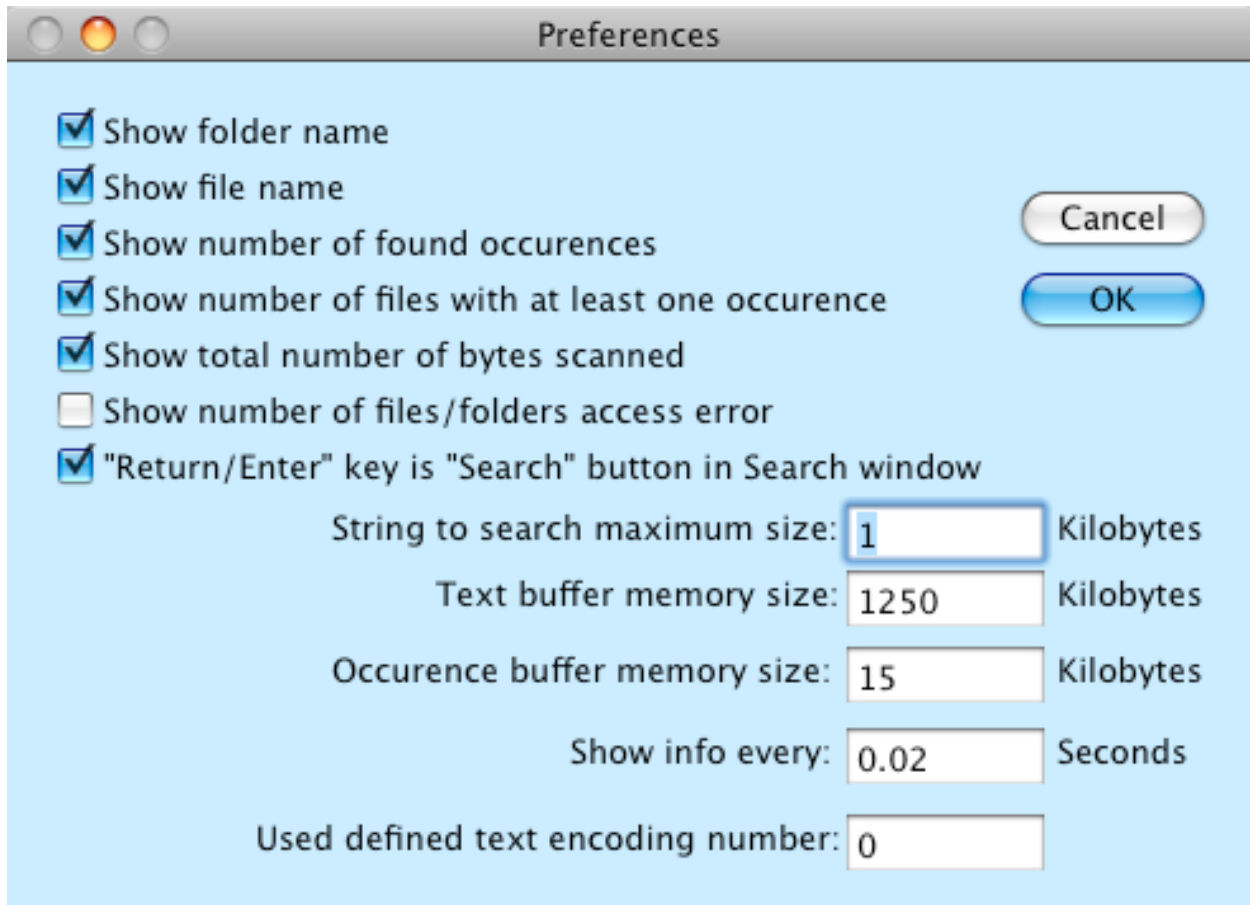
In the *Demo* target the word *Apple* appears 14646 times in 1502 files. The scroll box show the 859<sup>th</sup> occurrence in the 12<sup>th</sup> file. The info (with blue label) shows that the word *Apple* appears at the 20<sup>th</sup> line and at the 17410<sup>th</sup> character from the start of the file. The **Show in Finder** button goes to the Finder and selects this file. The **Info** gives the complete path name, the size and others characteristics of this file.

Use **Open file with** popup to select an application to open the file. You can also add on the fly a new application to the popup menu list. For a more complete tuning use **Special > Launcher** in the menu bar. Use **Show as** to change the display mode to hexadecimal or other encoding format.



To walk through the result first set the file (number) in the **Files** box then set the the index of the occurrence in the **Strings** items box. To save all the occurrences as a plain text file select the menu **Special > Save search result as...**

## Preferences



Preferences

- ☒ Show folder name
- ☒ Show file name
- ☒ Show number of found occurrences
- ☒ Show number of files with at least one occurrence
- ☒ Show total number of bytes scanned
- ☐ Show number of files/folders access error
- ☒ "Return/Enter" key is "Search" button in Search window

String to search maximum size:  Kilobytes

Text buffer memory size:  Kilobytes

Occurrence buffer memory size:  Kilobytes

Show info every:  Seconds

Used defined text encoding number:

Cancel OK

The kind of progress info you wish to see in the lower pane of the **Search** window is set by the check boxes named **Show...** In the **Search** window the Return and Enter keys have the same action as the **Search** button. But if the last check box of the **Preferences** window is not marked, these will be used to create a new line in the **String to search** textfield of the **Search** window.

By default the progress info in the **Search** window is updated every 0.02 second. So most of the CPU time is devoted to the search engine. Gauge this value according to your computer speed.

**QuickSearch** does its search job inside a file by reading the file in blocks of 1250 Kilobytes. The files on the hard disk are generally smaller so most of the time the file is (quickly) loaded in one shot. If you have a lot of memory and/or work on bigger files increase this value in **Text buffer memory size**.

## Drag and Drop

To open and/or create a new target simply drag and drop a set of files/folders on the **QuickSearch** application icon. This set of files/folders will be automatically included in the target items.

You get the same action If the application is open and the set is dropped into the large Triangle of the **Search** window.

If you drag and drop some text in this Triangle a new target is created and the **String to search** field is filled with this text.

To change the **String to search** field select the text anywhere and drop it into the the **Found** or **Search** window (but not into the Triangle). To add files and/or folders drop these Finder items into the the **Found** or **Search** window. The **Target** window will be opened and updated according to this change. Just click **OK** to work with the new parameter.

## Localization

**QuickSearch** uses both French and English languages. The language is automatically set from the version of OS X system in use.

The **Encoding** popup menu of the **Search** and **Target** window can be used to select the foreign language and/or format (encoding) for the input string. The **Show as** popup menu In the **Found** window does a similar task for the output text. For encoding other than the ones show in the **Search** and **Target** window you enter an encoding index in the the **Preferences** window. The **External String Encodings** included in the **QuickSearch** archive hold the list of encoding supported by Apple.

## Distribution

**QuickSearch** is free and can be freely distributed as long as the **QuickSearch** archive is not modified.

## History

July 25, 1996: first version (OS 7)

July 20, 2004: OS 10.3 support

May 1, 2006: OS 10.4 support

March 15: written for 64 bits cpu

Special thanks to Kathy Morgan who helped me to translate this documentation.

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